

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 /082 W  
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P R 211116Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 738  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
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E. O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT IS PGOV  
SUBJ: CONVERSATIONS WITH DMC DISSIDENTS

REF.: TEL AVIV 777

1. SUMMARY: CONVERSATIONS WITH DMC LEADERS INDICATE  
THE LIKELIHOOD OF SEVEN MKS LEAVING THE PARTY BEFORE TOO  
LONG; FIVE WOULD FORM A NEW PARTY CONSISTING OF A SHINUI CORE  
AND PERHAPS TWO WOULD MOVE TO THE LIKUD. RUBINSTEIN AND  
MOST OTHER DISSIDENTS WOULD POSTPONE A SPLIT WHILE PEACE  
TALKS ARE IN PROGRESS. MOREOVER, RUBINSTEIN TOLD US THE  
NEW PARTY WOULD SUPPORT THE COALITION AND NOT DEMAND REP-  
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RESENTATION IN THE CABINET. WIRSHUBSKI, APPARENTLY INTENT  
ON LEAVING, SEES LITTLE DANGER OF A CABINET CRISIS  
RESULTING FROM A SPLIT. ALGERBELI, ALTHOUGH A POSSIBLE  
CANDIDATE FOR BOLTING, BELIEVES YADIN HAS MADE A STRONG CASE  
FOR PARTY UNITY AT THIS JUNCTURE, MEANWHILE, YADIN HAS  
PRIVATELY STATED HE WOULD NOT AGREE TO GIVE UP ANY MINIS-  
TERIAL SLOT IN THE EVENT OF A SPLIT. END SUMMARY

2. ALTHOUGH DISSIDENTS WITHIN THE DMC HAVE AGREED TO REMAIN IN THE PARTY FOR THE TIME BEING (REFTTEL), ORGANIZING A NEW PARTY SEEMS TO BE STILL VERY MUCH ON THE MINDS OF THE REBEL LEADERS. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH AN EMBOFF, LEADERS OF THE DMC DISSIDENTS AMNON RUBINSTEIN AND MORDECHAI WIRSHUBSKI PROVIDED FURTHER INSIGHTS ON THE POSTPONED SPLIT IN THE PARTY. RUBINSTEIN SAID HE WAS NOW ATTEMPTING TO PATCH THINGS UP. IT WAS CLEAR, HOWEVER, FROM THE REST OF HIS REMARKS THAT HIS EFFORTS WERE INTENDED ONLY AS A TEMPORARY REMEDY. THERE ARE MANY THINGS WRONG WITH THE PARTY AND THE HUMILIATION OF LOSING IN THE KNESSET COMMITTEE VOTE ON NEW SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK BECAUSE DMC MKS OPPOSED OR ABSTAINED ON THEIR PARTY'S OWN RESOLUTION WAS THE LAST STRAW, ACCORDING TO RUBINSTEIN. WITH IMPLIED REF TO THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS (THE CONVERSATION TOOK PLACE JUST BEFORE RECALL OF THE EGYPTIAN DEL), RUBINSTEIN SAID THE TIMING IS WRONG FOR A SPLIT NOW.

3. HE NOTED THAT ONLY STEF WERTHEIMER AND WIRSHUBSKI REMAIN UNRECONCILED TO ANOTHER GO AT MAINTAINING PARTY UNITY. WHEN THE EMBOFF OBSERVED THAT THESE TWO PLUS RUBINSTEIN WERE PILLARS OF THE OLD SHINUI PARTY BEFORE ITS MERGER WITH THE DMC A YEAR AGO, RUBINSTEIN CONFIRMED THAT THE DISSIDENTS WERE ESSENTIALLY SHINUI PEOPLE. HE ADDED THAT FORMER SHINUI MEMBERS HAVE LEFT THE DMC IN DROVES.

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4. SHOULD THERE BE A SPLIT, HE EXPECTED SEVEN MKS TO LEAVE THE PARTY. THIS WOULD PROBABLY MEAN YADIN AND THE RUMP DMC WOULD HAVE TO YIELD THE DEPUTY PREMIERSHIP AND PERHAPS A PORTFOLIO, BUT THE GOVERNMENT'S MAJORITY WOULD BE UNAFFECTED SINCE THE REBELS INTENDED TO REMAIN IN THE COALITION. THEY WOULD, HOWEVER, WANT A COALITION AGREEMENT GIVING THE NEW PARTY THE RIGHT TO DISAGREE WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN CERTAIN AREAS. RUBINSTEIN SAID THE DISSIDENTS WOULD NOT REQUEST A MINISTERIAL SLOT; THEY WOULD NOT WANT TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISIONS. (COMMENT: THIS IS SIMILAR TO THE POSITION OF ANOTHER COALITION PARTNER, THE AGUDAT YISRAEL PARTY.) HE REMARKED THAT PEOPLE THINK HIM POLITICALLY NAIVE

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FOR ESCHEWING A CABINET POSITION. RUBINSTEIN THINKS THIS REFLECTS SHORT-SIGHTEDNESS. HE TAKES THE LONG VIEW. SHOULD THE DISSIDENT PARTY DECLINE A MINISTRY, THE PORTFOLIO TAKEN FROM THE RUMP DMC COULD BE GIVEN TO ONE OF THE TWO NEW MINISTERS WITHOUT PORTFOLIO, THEREBY REDUCING THE SIZE OF THE CABINET (AND, INCIDENTLY, DEMONSTRATING LOYALTY TO THE PROFFESSED DMC PRINCIPLE OF NATIONALIZING THE GOVERNMENT). RUBINSTEIN BELIEVES THE PUBLIC WOULD APPLAUD HIM FOR THE "SACRIFICE" OF DECLINING A PORTFOLIO.

5. WIRSHUBSKI, WHO IS UNRESTRAINED IN HIS CRITICISM OF YADIN'S LEADERSHIP, SAW LITTLE POSSIBILITY THAT A SPLIT COULD BE AVOIDED. ONLY IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT SEVERAL  
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CHANGES, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING, WERE AGREED TO WOULD HE REMAIN IN THE DMC: NEW LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY'S SECRETARIAT, REDUCING YADIN'S POWERS IN ALL PARTY ORGANS, AND REPLACING MEIR ZOREA ON THE KNESSET'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE. WIRSHUBSKI ALSO THOUGHT SEVEN MKS ARE PREPARED, SOONER OR LATER, TO LEAVE THE PARTY. TWO ARE RIGHT-LEANING AND HE THOUGHT WOULD JOIN LIKUD: ZOREA AND ASSAF YAGURI.

WIRSHUBSKI BELIEVED ZOREA MIGHT NOT BOLT BUT WOULD PREFER TO BE EXPELLED AND THEN BE ABLE TO CLAIM THAT HE HAD NO QUARREL WITH THE PARTY BUT WAS DRUMMED OUT FOR STICKING TO PRINCIPLE. THE OTHER FIVE WHO WOULD FORM A NEW PARTY ARE WIRSHUBSKI, RUBINSTEIN, WERTHEIMER, SHUMUEL TOLEDANO AND ZAIDAN ATASHI. NO NAME FOR THE DISSIDENTS HAS YET BEEN CHOSEN. "SHINUI AGAIN" WAS SUGGESTED AND REJECTED BECAUSE IT WAS ARGUED THAT MANY POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS MIGHT BE PUT-OFF BY "SHINUI" IN THE NAME. IN CONTRAST TO RUBINSTEIN, WIRSHUBSKI CLAIMED THAT THE DISSIDENT ELEMENT IS MUCH WIDER THAN THE OLD SHINUI.

6. WIRSHUBSKI WAS UNCONCERNED OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF A GOVERNMENT CRISIS IN THE EVENT OF A SPLIT. EVEN IF THE NRP, FOR EXAMPLE, INSISTED ON CABINET CHANGES, THEY WOULD EASILY AGREE TO DEFERRING THE RESHUFFLE UNTIL AFTER THE PEACE TALKS.

7. ANOTHER EMBOFF SPOKE ON JAN 19 TO MK MORDECHAI ALGERBELI, WHO IS A FENCESITTER BETWEEN BOLTING AND REMAINING LOYAL. FOR THE PRESENT, HE OPPOSES A SPLIT, MAINTAINING THAT YADIN PRESENTED AT THE JAN 16 SECRETARIAT MEETING A VERY PERSUASIVE CASE FOR CONTINUING PARTY UNITY WHILE DELICATE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS ARE EN TRAIN. COUNTERING CHARGES OF INEFFECTIVENESS, YADIN ARGUED THAT HE WAS PLAYING AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN GOVERNMENT COUNCILS AND HAD INFLUENCED BEGIN AND DAYAN ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PEACE NEGOTIATION POLICY.

8. DAVAR'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS EDITOR INFORMED US LAST NIGHT THAT IN AN OFF-THE-RECORD MEETING WITH EDITORS YADIN ADMITTED HIS PARTY MIGHT SOON LOSE THREE OR FOUR MKS. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE WOULD INSIST ON RETAINING THE DMC'S FOUR MINISTERIAL POSITIONS.

9. COMMENT: THESE CONVERSATIONS TEND TO CONFIRM THE IMPRESSION THAT A DMC SPLIT MAY BE ONLY A MATTER OF TIME AND YADIN'S TALK WITH THE EDITORS RAISES THE SPECTER OF A CRISIS SHOULD IT OCCUR. AS FIRM SUPPORTERS OF THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS, A CABINET CRISIS AT THIS TIME IS THE LAST THING THE DISSENTERS WANT. WHILE RUBINSTEIN HAS THE REPUTATION (WHICH HE ADMITS) OF BEING POLITICALLY NAIVE, HIS DECISION TO DEFER ACTION INDICATES HE IS LESS SURE THAN WIRSHUBSKI THAT NO GOVERNMENT CRISIS WOULD RESULT FROM A SPLIT AND REFLECTS AT LEAST MORE POLITICAL SAGACITY THAN HIS COLLEAGUE DISPLAYS. LEWIS

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## Message Attributes

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